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Special report:

The 1988 «wave»
in Sweden

K.Gösta Rehn:

The life of
a pioneer



AFU Newsletter

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The legacy of Gösta Rehn

K. Gösta Rehn, Swedish pioneer ufologist and leading UFO intellectual, died last summer.

I first met Rehn at a UFO symposium in Stockholm in 1971. Rehn was then regarded, by a few leading (but less intellectual) ufologists, as a stubborn and conservative old man. Rehn refused to swallow the popular new age and occult philosophies delivered by these enthusiasts as a part of the UFO parcel.

What would Swedish ufology be like without Rehn? His books was the first reliable info on UFOs to be found in the public libraries. Without him I (and many of my colleagues) might (sooner or later) have found UFOs too "far out", and turned our attention to matters more down-to-earth. A whole generation of ufologists grew up reading his books. Rehn's pen even reached foreign nations on the continent, the UK, USA and Japan.

I always felt sympathy, admiration and respect for Gösta Rehn. As I now have read parts of his voluminous correspondence, this feeling increases. I feel inferior to his scholarly, academic intellect, but kindred with most of Rehn's thoughts - from his disgust of everything religious to his hatred for motorists and cars.

This old man had a great influence on many of us. One may, as Håkan Blomqvist does in his biographical portrait in this issue, criticize Rehn for his credulity, his stubborn belief in impossible cases and the ET theory. Still, he led us on the way to a ufology that was closer to reality and facts. No one could have done it better than he did.

In 1985, I told Rehn that the secret defence documents on the 1946 ghost rocket wave had finally been released. "They deceived me", was his angry comment. He had tried, in vain, for many years to get a release. And Rehn never learned the truth about the Domsten affair. Time was not on his side.

The legacy of Rehn is heavy on our shoulders. We must strive to make ufology a serious and intellectual study, not a subject of belief and worship.

Anders Liljegren

K. Gösta Rehn 1891-1989

The life of a Swedish UFO pioneer

by Håkan Blomqvist

On June 17, 1989, the grand old man of Swedish ufology, K. Gösta Rehn, died. Shortly after his 98th birthday on May 22 he caught pneumonia and was taken to a Stockholm hospital. With Rehn an epoch in Swedish ufology comes to an end.

In 1978, Rehn donated parts of his literature collection to AFU (Archives for UFO Research). On Aug. 27, 1989, Anders Liljegren and I drove to Bromma to fetch the remainder of his collection, which, according to Rehn's last wish, would be given to AFU after his death. Much to our surprise we found that Rehn's daughter had disposed of all of Rehn's correspondence.

With hearts thumping in our throats, we wandered to a garbage room in the backyard. As luck would have it, there were still 32 thick files of K. Gösta Rehn's personal correspondence with UFO witnesses and researchers from all over the world. A truly amazing base material had been saved to the afterworld.

Cultural environment

K. Gösta Rehn was born on May 22, 1891. His father was manager of the beautiful Håsselby castle to the northwest of Stockholm, owned by the noble Bonde family. The castle was a resort for cultural personalities since the 16th century, and had had famous guests such as composer Carl Michael Bellman and visionary Emanuel Swedenborg. (1)

Rehn's parents lived in one of the wings of the castle. In 1896 Gösta met famous novelist Verner von Heidenstam, who stayed at the castle for a few years. The Rehn family often took part in musical evenings at the castle and so music, especially the piano, became an early ingredient of young Gösta's life. Gösta sang in the choir when Marie Curie received her Nobel prize in chemistry in 1911. (2)

After his exam in 1910, Gösta was accepted by the Musical Academy as a piano student. His big dream was to become a concert pianist. The family's poor economy forced him, however, into quite another path: he started law studies at the Stockholm high school.

The US years

In 1919 he received a scholarship and went to the US for law and economy studies. He would remain in the US until 1939; twenty years that he would later regard as a waste of time. Rehn hated capitalism and American lifestyle. He often made himself unpopular with his radical views.

In 1922 Gösta Rehn married in New York, but his marriage

was unhappy due to different outlooks and temperaments. The couple had a daughter. During his US years Rehn worked with banks, insurance companies and industries. The 1930s depression hit hard and Rehn found himself without a job.

To survive he wrote articles on music, theatre, literature and economics for Swedish newspapers. The New York years was a difficult time for the sensitive and musical Gösta Rehn. He compensated the hard work in bank and insurance with intense studies of sociology, psychology and natural sciences.

Rehn continued his formal studies after he had gotten a promise of a future position. He studied American history, politics and literature at the New York State University, and law, for four years, at Fordham University. He became a bachelor of law and a bachelor of arts, but the job he had been offered never materialized.

Back in Sweden

Gösta finally got a job with the Swedish State Hydro Electrical Company. He departed for Stockholm on June 12, 1939. His family remained in New York. Rehn and his wife finally separated in 1949.

Passport photo
from AFU's Rehn
collection, dated
Oct. 1, 1946.

Rehn was 55 when
the ghost rocket
wave hit Sweden.



Regaining his powers, after the war years, Rehn took up studies of Freud, Adler, Russel and Bernal. This resulted in an aggressive, atheistic, left-wing socialist view of life. He was well read in human as well as natural sciences and kept pace with current cultural debate. Between 1954 and 1962 he wrote articles for a cultural magazine, "Perspektiv", on economy, cybernetics, brain physiologi, semantics and philosophy.

His UFO interest started in 1954 and in 1955 he translated Donald Keyhoe's "Flying saucers from outer space" into Swedish. Despite his intense aversion to religions

and superstitions Rehn became passionately interested in the UFO riddle. He was impressed with the many military reports from seemingly sensible witnesses. He followed the UFO literature and interviewed witnesses.

The Gotland case

On Aug 5, 1957, policeman Ernst Akerberg and his wife Karin sighted two classical saucers at Lergravsviken on the eastern shore of the Gotland island, in the Baltic. The incident was reported to the Defence Staff and became the focal point of a national radio debate on Nov. 13, 1958. Gösta Rehn and representatives of the Staff and the Research Institute of National Defence took part.

The official view was that the Gotland saucers had been lighted weather balloons, while Rehn thought this case was proof of extraterrestrial vehicles. "The richness in detail that showed up in letters from and talks with these witnesses was a decisive point in my research", he wrote. (3)

Rehn published the case in "Perspektiv" in 1962. "The nice thing about a close encounter like the Gotland case is that the descriptions immediately exclude every explanation", he wrote. (4)

Being as well-read in psychology as he was, and a rational sceptic, it is quite remarkable that he chose not to be more cautious with words. One would want, for instance, a psychological profile of Akerberg and his wife. What was their outlook on life? Were they spiritualists or what? From the early 1960s Rehn is not the critical researcher but a missionary for saucer reality.

The Domsten affair

The second big case that Rehn got involved with was the Domsten affair. Two young men, Stig Rydberg and Hans Gustafsson, stated that, on the night of Dec. 29, 1958, they were almost kidnapped by creatures from a landed saucer near Helsingborg, in the south of Sweden.

Today we know as a fact that this case was a hoax motivated by money. Strangely, Rehn took their report for granted although he should have been warned by their eagerness for money and the attempts to expand the story into a saucer ride. Rehn tried to make them drunk one evening to get to the truth, but with no result.

Today one might wonder why a scientifically inclined sceptic such as Rehn would believe this story...?

In the autumn of 1957 Rehn retired from the Hydro Electrical Company, where he had worked with organization, statistics and economy. In 1958 he became the Swedish representative of the American Aerial Phenomena Research Organization (APRO). His investigations of Swedish cases were published in the APRO Bulletin and he started a vigorous correspondence with Coral Lorenzen.

On March 23, 1957, the Psychological Society was created in Stockholm. Rehn became a member and was, for some time, also a member of the board. This more or less occult group suited him badly. In a 1960 letter he made the



For several decades Rehn had a lively correspondence with Coral Lorenzen of APRO.

Rehn planned to visit the Lorenzens to meet them, and Olavo T. Fontes, but he couldn't afford the voyage.

following remarks: "Their gatherings seem like prayer-meetings. A lot of cultured ladies take part. Most of them are spiritualists, occultists, theosophists, believers in telepathy, etc. Thus I am not in harmony with that clique. We drink tea, have discussions and much literature is available." (5)

Above all, Rehn wanted to interest scientists in the saucer enigma. He hated religion, occultism and superstition. He wanted the saucers to fit into a "radical, left-wing socialistic and atheistic outlook - that is science above all", he wrote in 1971. (6)

The first book

By 1960 Gösta Rehn had the first manuscript ready for a book on saucers. The publishers rejected it until 1966, when Zindermans of Gothenburg bought the book. October 1966 saw the first edition of "De flygande tefaten: dokument och teori". (The flying saucers: documents and theory). The book was well received by the critics. Rehn counted no less than 24 positive reviews. Tord Hall, a university teacher, wrote in Svenska Dagbladet: "This is a badly needed book. It presents the first matter-of-fact treatment in Swedish of this complex issue." (7)

Rehns book was a healthy contrast to the editions from the Farthenon occult phalanx book company of Helsingborg that had showered the market with unbelievable stories of saucer rides with beautiful Venusians.



Rehns first book concentrated on the best reports from the US and the role of the US Air Force. Only three Swedish cases were mentioned: the Gotland case, the Domsten case and the sighting of a polished saucer by air captain Ulf Christiérnsson from an airplane over southern Sweden on Dec 17, 1953. Rehn stated emphatically: 'I

maintain that the saucers are real vehicles. That they come from somewhere in space is the only reasonable explanation at hand." (8)

Rehn tried to interest scientists and intellectuals. He wanted investigation by professional researchers. In Rehn's thick correspondence files we find letters from Tord Hall, David Ingvar, Tor Ragnar Gerholm, Ingemar Hedenius and other wellknown Swedish intellectuals. Most of them politely avert, saying that they lack the time for detailed studies of the problem. Rehn wanted to raise the question from the religious ramblings of the occult up to serious investigations.

Due to his book Rehn became the supreme saucer expert, interviewed by newspapers and other media. He was a frequent lecturer. On Dec 6, 1967, he lectured for the newborn association SIFU (The Independent institution for ufology) in Stockholm. SIFU was formed by defectors from the Ifological society, mostly youngsters and students, who preferred a more scientific approach to UFOs.

The group even got a small contribution of 500 kronor from the city of Stockholm, which caused media interest. The Expressen evening newspaper headed an article on May 9, 1967: "Confusion in the town hall. Have we invested money in flying saucers?". Rehn had hopes that SIFU would become a coordinating force for serious research, but the group died after about a year.

Book number two

"UFO! Nya fakta om de flygande tefaten" (UFO! New facts on the flying saucers) was Rehn's second book, published in 1969. An admiring preface was written by physicist Ulf Ringström from the University of Stockholm, himself engaged in UFOs. This time a major portion of the book treated Swedish reports, e.g. a sampling of reports from the Defence Staff and FOA (Research Institute of National Defence) files, covering 1947-1968.



Rehn was not very thorough with details, however. The book had many erroneous facts. For instance one report from 1947, from Bror Drake (an air force employee), describes a sighting of a reddish ball-of-light "three meters in front of the car". This was classified by Rehn

as a "close encounter". The original report (now with the AFU report archives) describes the object as distant, having "a diameter of a tennis ball seen at a distance of three meters", which is quite a different thing from what Rehn reports.

Further on in his book, Rehn reviews the chain of evidence for the reality of the saucers. He emphasizes the solution based on "philosophy of science" as the final answer to solve the knot and prove the existence of the saucers. His thesis was: "If an unknown flying vehicle X, always accompanied by the properites a, b, c, d, et cetera, has been competently observed tens of thousands of times, and the reports have been instrumentally verified, then follows that X is a reality, thus a new kind of aerial vehicle, a "flying saucer" (UFO)." (10)

Borrowing his reasonings from Bertrand Russell, Rehn attempted to prove that his model of proof was scientifically acceptable and the only road towards solving the dispute. He rejected the demand, from physicists, for a 100 % certainty. The evidence was in the tens of thousands of similar reports. "From the resemblances, the conformity in details between cases, one reaches the general conclusion - the saucers are physical, real flying vehicles." (11)

Competently observed?

In hindsight one can observe that Rehn's model of proof is punctured by the expression "competently observed". Thorough evaluation of several classical saucer sightings, such as the Doansten affair, has shown that they often have rational explanations. This is also an international trend in UFO research, especially in Europe. One has mainly concentrated on psychological-sociological models of explanation. Despite his impressive general knowledge of psychology Rehn failed to provide psychological profiles of the witnesses he investigated.

In his second book Rehn, once more, kept distance to the religious UFO groups. "The occult phalanx has damaged the saucer question. The fantastic reality of the saucers will get no hearing from intellectuals, scientists and other sensible people through tales of saucer rides, talks with noble saviors from Venus and such drivel." (12) Rehn warned of the antiintellectual side of occultism that can "make people prepared to accept a new fascism in the world". The best would be to let qualified researchers and interested scientists do the work with financial support from government och private funds. (13)

Rehns first two books spurred saucer interest in Sweden and was indirectly the cause for the formation of two new influential organisations in 1969/1970: The national organization UFO-Sweden, and GICOFF (the Gothenburg Information Center for UFOs).

The third book - Tefaten är här! (published in 1974 by Abelard-Schuman of Londond as "UFOs. Here and now!") - came in 1972 and was labeled the best of the triplet by Bengt Bengtsson, who reviewed it for the Swedish library journal. Undoubtedly it is wellwritten and reveals an

extensive knowledge of natural sciences. Some 40 pages are used for criticism of the then just published Condon report. Rehn also discusses new contributions from Allen Hynek and James McDonald.

Tefaten är här!

K.Gösta Rehn

Zndermans



Sensationsell tefaten är här! av Stora Spänningsberget i Småland 6 maj 1971

Microwaves, not telepathy

In an extensive coverage of the physical and psychological effects from radiation Rehn introduces an imaginative hypotheses to explain claimed telepathic messages from saucers:

"...My thesis (is) that the flying saucer is probably using microwave techniques in order to transmit messages and suggestive images to an individual brain... Telecommunication takes place by neuro-physiological means. It seems evident that this telecommunication and hypnotic psychological effect takes place without telepathy or other parapsychological miracles which so many frivolously hope for by way of explanation!" (14)

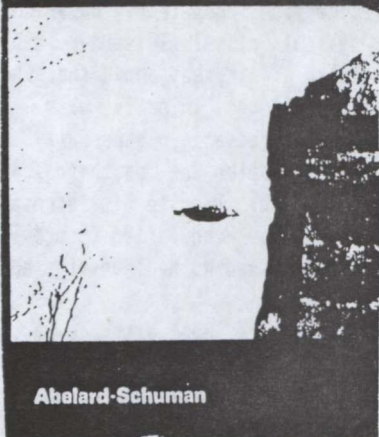
Possibly the theory should not be regarded as science fiction, but judging from "the telepathic messages" published so far, the space people are a bunch of very naive occultists or sunday-school religious preachers whose intellectual capacity can only make an impression on those already committed to belief. If these claimed saucer people represent "a highly evolved civilization" my only wish is for them to turn back home.

"Tefaten är här!" had a lot of criticism of culture and religion, and in this discussion Rehn hints at what made him so fascinated by the UFO riddle. He writes: "The UFO has a destructive effect on the religious view of the world. And yet it provides an opportunity, a promise of contact with the cosmos." (15) Here we can spot much of the psychological motivation for so many of us to spend much of our lives on saucers: the possibility that we may stand before the totally unknown and revolutionary. From that point on it is only a matter of personal disposition whether you see this as a threat or as a promise. To Rehn it was a promise.

I met Rehn for the first time in the spring of 1974. Anders Liljegren and I interviewed him at his home. As a young man, 21 years of age, with many strange occult ideas in my head, there wasn't much I understood of

UFOs Here and Now!

K.Gösta Rehn

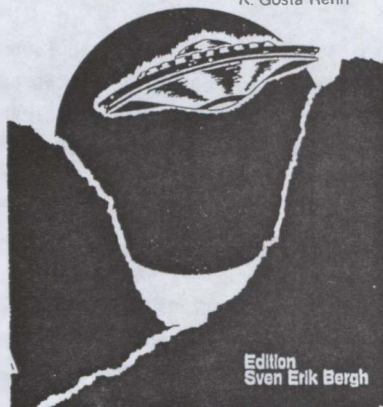


Abelard-Schuman

"Tefaten är här!" was an international success for K.Gösta Rehn. The book was translated into English, German, Finnish, Dutch and Japanese. A planned Polish edition seemingly never materialized.

Die fliegenden Untertassen sind hier!

K. Gösta Rehn



Edition
Sven Erik Bergh

ZAGEN k.gösta rehn ZIJ ZE VLIEGEN?

En officiële CIA-programma houdt zich bezig met het ongelofbaar aantal meldingen van UFO's (vliegende schotel) Zonder reden?
Na zorgvuldige onderzoek van de verschillende officiële UFO-rapporten komt de auteur tot de sensationele conclusie:
De bewijzen zijn nu bij de UFO's gegeneerd!



Fontein Folio

UFOJA näkyvissä

K.Gösta Rehn TAMMI



Rehn's reasoning. Despite loneliness and rather poor circumstances of living Rehn was full of intensity and a hunger for debate. He was surprisingly vital at 82 years of age.

In the interview that Anders Liljegren published, Rehn felt sorry that so few qualified scientists and academics cared for the saucer problem. He detested "the drive called the New Age" then on its way, especially from the United States. One can also sense a grain of doubt concerning the (then) increased UFO interest in Sweden. When asked: "Is there a future for ufology?" Rehn answered: "People will get more and more crazy due to the coming catastrophes... The urge for the supernatural will increase - it will become like a drug." (16)

The "new" ufology

Despite the handicap of a dwindling eyesight Rehn wrote a fourth book in 1976 - "UFO-utmaningen" (The challenge of the UFO). It is mainly a review of the question of proof, and of what came to be Rehn's favorite idea: his claim of false propaganda against the saucers, e.g. the CIA's cover-up and secrecy of factual UFO reports.

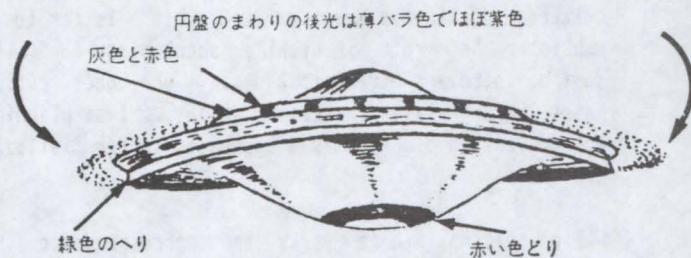
The book's last chapter is a sharp criticism of the 1970s trend in ufology, "the new ufology" as presented by Jacques Vallée and John Keel. They thought saucers were from other dimensions, not extraterrestrial. Keel named the humanoids ultraterrestrial and compared them to demons, angels and trolls of age-old Scandinavian folklore.

This parapsychological-occult view was an "appalling blind alley" to Rehn. UFO research had "a thousand times more substance" than parapsychology, and shouldn't be infected by the superstition of occult phenomena. Once again, Rehn warns of the occult wave and its social and political consequences. He sees the danger of people returning to belief in a primitive, magical universe. "In such a 'reality' UFO research has no place. The UFO is a reality, within reach of rational investigation", he ended his fourth and final book.

Rehn's books sold reasonably well for such an odd subject. The first book had 4.000 copies printed in the first edition, and two further editions. The third book, "Tefaten är här", saw 5.000 copies printed and was sold and translated to England, Finland, the Netherlands, Germany and Japan. He received between 2.000 and 10.000 kronor each year from royalties, a welcome addition to the poor economy of a pensioner.

Rehn's critics

Through his aggressive, missionary view on the saucers, Rehn found enemies among the military and among critical journalists. There were attacks from both sides of the fence. Reviewing Rehn's fourth book Per Gahrton, a wellknown journalist and later co-founder of the Swedish "green" party, thought that "K.Gösta Rehn's UFO theory belongs to the new tradition of thought... It opens a great market for occult phenomena in a scientific disguise." (17)



ラルス・テルンが撮影した円盤を技術的に改良した図

Sketch of the saucer seen and photographed by the Swede Lars Thörn on May 6, 1971. The case impressed Rehn and was carried in all editions of "Tefaten är här!". This illustration is from the Japanese edition.

GICOFF of Gothenburg later managed to duplicate the photos by snapping a Chevrolet hub cap tied to a string. Lars Thörn's claims are now regarded with much scepticism in Sweden. Less than two months after the first incident Thörn managed to snap a whole series of photos of a formation of three saucers.

The most harsh criticism of Rehn's books and ideas was presented by cultural journalist Göran Bengtsson in a series of articles in the autumn of 1976. (18)

Bengtsson put emphasis on what he claimed was Rehn's credulity; his belief in the saucer reports; his quoting of data from "the notoriously unreliable saucer literature". Rehn's scientific theories Bengtsson found just "laughable". The small remainder of saucer reports had no meaning. Our existence is full of unexplained residues. That's something science can live with. Science has no 100% claim for certainty, Bengtsson wrote.

In that sense Rehn had misunderstood the empirical way of research. Bengtsson's final judgement of Rehn's authorship started with a quote from Rehn: "A flood of contaminated mysticism pours on us: I couldn't have said it better myself. Compared to this flood K.Gösta Rehn appears like a relatively innocent drop of water in a rather harmless pond." (19)

In his reply to Bengtsson, Rehn refers to the fact that saucers were taken seriously by prominent scientists like Allen Hynek. Bengtsson was dismissed as a unsuspecting armchair critic who knows nothing about the subject.

During the last years of the 1970s Rehn's health deteriorated. He could no longer read books or newspapers. Emolus in his legs made it difficult for him to walk.

"An introvert eccentric"

To sum up Rehn's life and worldview is no easy task. He was a fascinating combination of a dreamer and a down-to-earth, passionate, radical critic of society. Often, in

his letters, he explained that he felt unhappy in our culture and with his human existence. In a letter to his publisher he wrote ironically about himself: "...I am just an introvert eccentric mad-man, who goes cycling, hates cars, plays the piano, dreams... I am planning a modern version of Freuds Das Unbehagen in der Civilization." (20)

While reading Rehn's works and correspondence I have often wondered why he let go of his sceptical, scientific standpoint to such an extent when it came to the saucers. The saucers became his Achilles' heel where fantastic stories, like the Domsten tale, were accepted without the critical sense he normally used for all kinds of superstitions.

Obviously, he was aware of the danger of superstitions of different kinds. Despite this awareness, he took part in the work of the board of the Ifological Society. In an unpublished manuscript from the early 60s, "Studies of ifological superstition", he commented on the members of the society:

"To an individual with an inclination for the natural sciences it is disgusting and gruesome to find people's mentality on such a low, primitive level. People are once again prepared for a new Hitler. It was modern superstition, disguised in more attractive dresses such as anti-intellectualism, vitalism, oxfordism or moral rearmament (superstition for the upper class), theosophy and other kinds of soups, that paved the way for nazism."

To Rehn's defence one might say that in the 1950s and 60s he was more or less alone, in Sweden, to try to tackle the UFO riddle. He was a pioneer and yet an old man, already in his 75th year when his first book was published.



The UFO phenomenon needs scientific studies from many disciplines, not the least comparative religion and psychology, as a balance to all the UFO cults. Critical, but well-informed sceptics are needed to tackle the UFO mystery in the right way.

If Rehn had followed an unbiased, sceptical line of thought he probably would have been able to interest more scientists to take part in solving the riddle. Instead he chose the aggressive, missionary line, possibly due to his credulity, as Göran Bengtsson wrote. He lay the groundwork, however, for a continued serious study of the UFO phenomena in Sweden. His written material and library is now available with Archives for UFO research (AFU) where it has been arranged and systematized.

As a final note I cannot help making the observation that Rehn was right in his pessimistic view on the development of culture. In a 1972 letter to a christian friend he wrote:

"I am fully satisfied and harmonic with my atheistic attitude. I am sorry if I hurt your feelings, but I am a disciple of Nietzsche, Bertrand Russell, Freud, et al. I despise the Pentecostal movement, Jehova's witnesses, the 7th day adventists, etc. There is something called mental hygiene... Everything goes to hell! I feel sorry for our children, our youth... There will be revivalist meetings and cries of Jesus as time goes on. Wait until the late 70s and 80s - if we are still alive." (21)

At this point K.Gösta Rehn, the old dreamer and saucer researcher, was, unfortunately, correct.

Notes:

1. Birger Olsson: Hässelby slott: från herresäte till nordiskt kulturcentrum, Stockholm 1988, pp. 47-48, 55-60.
2. Gerd Ribbing: Mitttalsminnen från Hässelby. Samfundet S:t Eriks årsbok 1955, Stockholm 1955, pp. 139-174.
3. K.Gösta Rehn: UFO! Nya fakta om de flygande tefaten, Zindermans, 1969, p. 47.
4. K.Gösta Rehn: En sällsam syn. Perspektiv, issue 3, 1962. The incident was chosen by Rehn as the best Swedish case for The encyclopedia of UFOs, edited by Ronald D.Story. See page 152-153 for a review of the case and also page 300 for Rehns personal position statement on UFOs.
5. Letter to "Miss Bengtsson", Nov 7, 1960.
6. Letter to GICOFF, Dec 10, 1971.
7. Tord Hall: Vad är ett flygande tefat? Svenska Dagbladet, Nov. 1, 1966.
8. K.Gösta Rehn: De flygande tefaten. Dokument och teori. Zindermans, 1966, pp. 13-14.
9. Rehn, 1969, p. 62.
10. Ibid, p. 150.
11. K.Gösta Rehn: Tillägg och förklaringar i UFO-frågan. Stockholm 1968, p. 5.
12. Rehn, 1969, p. 183.
13. Ibid. p. 197.
14. K.Gösta Rehn: Tefaten är här! Zindermans, 1972, pp. 105-106. English edition by Abelard-Schuman, p. 100.
15. Ibid. p. 157. English edition, p. 161.

16. Anders Liljegen: Gösta Rehns böcker får världsvid spridning. Ufologen, nr 14, mars-april 1974, p. 10.
17. Per Gahrton: Nu samarbetar CIA med folk från andra planeter. Göteborgstidningen, July 22, 1976.
18. Göran Bengtsson: Tefatsforskningens nestor. Sydsvenska Dagbladet, July 6, 1976. Tefat på villovägar, July 7. En lukt av abnormt och psykiskt, July 27.
19. Ibid. July 14, 1976.
20. Letter to Sune Stigsjöö (Zindermans), June 2, 1966.
21. Letter to "Einar", April 20, 1972.

For sale or exchange

One copy each of the following K.Gösta Rehn titles:
 - Ufoja näkyvissä (Tefaten är här!, in Finnish, 1972).
 - Uusinta tietoa lentävistä lautasista (UFO! Mya fakta... in Finnish, 1969).
 - Zagen zij ze vliegen? (Tefaten är här!, in Dutch, 1972)

Second-hand copies of all Swedish editions of Rehn's books are also available for sale or exchange. SEK 40.--/book.

==== AFU Newsletter 34 =====

===== UFOs are still in the air =====

The 1988 UFO "wave" in Sweden

by Anders Liljegen

It is a popular belief that UFOs have "gone with the wind" and that "the UFO phenomenon" has been reduced to identifiable natural phenomena, or to too-strange-to-believe stories of American abductions, document cover-ups and crashes. At least, it may seem so if we study the national Swedish newspapers.

Despite this, we still find a great deal of seemingly unsolved cases in the small provincial papers, and also in the report archives of UFO-Sweden, the national organization. In 1989 UFO-Sweden's annual meeting decided to place it's wealthy report archives under the management of AFU. This means that reports from most Swedish researchers and groups are centralized in one place, where they are kept chronologically and are available to anyone. This also concerns (non-secret) military reports which are routinely copied and added to the archives.

In this article I intend to review some of the best cases reported in 1988, which has been considered a "wave" year here in Sweden. With limited space it becomes a necessity to shorten some very long and detailed reports.

Much of the activity happened - as in previous years - in the provinces of Dalarna (Dalecarlia) and Värmland, in the western part of Sweden. "Project Dalarna" collected hundreds of strange sightings in the winters of 1986 and 1987, in similar vein to the wellknown Project Hessdalen.

A new enthusiast group, headed by Paul Hellberg and UFO book writer Boris Jungkvist, acted on the Dalarna scene in 1988. The group, that works mostly as skywatchers, claim they received 235-240 sightings in the July-December 1988 period alone. A number of these cases are referenced in this article, gleaned from Boris Jungkvist's recent book. The balance of the data from that new group seem rather questionable, or lacking of information, as it is known only through newspaper stories.

The main portion of our cases, however, are from better UFO-Sweden investigations and/or from reliable newspapers and magazines. Only about a dozen cases were filed with FOA (the National Defence Research Institute); only one of these seemed interesting enough to be mentioned in this report. Special thanks to the UFO-Sweden report centre headed by Stig Aggestad and Gudrun Andersson and her colleagues in Västerbergslagens UFO-förening (VBUE) for their untiring efforts.

Hovering luminous ball

The luminous ball that doesn't move, or displays very little movement, is a tricky case for the ufologist. In most such cases it is, in reality, one of the wellknown heavenly bodies observed low on the horizon, in dizzy weather, or with clouds passing in front, to make it appear like the object was moving. The 1988 wave had many such cases that were easily identified as the moon or one of the planets, but at least one remains unidentified. It occurred in the last twenty-four hours of 1987:

The case happened on Dec. 31, 1987 (New Year's Eve). A woman in Bispberg (a mining community in Dalarna) noticed that the family's house animals became restless late in the night. At 3 o'clock the woman went out and saw her dog standing stiff with its jaws rattling. An iceblue metallic sphere, about 6 x 8 meters, hovered only 150 meters away. The sphere was surrounded by a grey-orange mist.

From openings in the bottom came, now and then, lightning flashes that reached for miles, that seemingly hit the ground. The woman was paralyzed and unable to call her husband for help. She had an oppressive feeling and thought she was going to die. She got an awful headache (that lasted for five days) and was seemingly hit by something in her back that burnt a hole in her jumper.

After five minutes the sphere disappeared. There was a terrible smell of sulphur and creosote in the area. (for more details see AFU Newsletter; 31, page 13 (in English) - other sources are: Bergslagsposten, Jan 5, 1988; Västerbergslagens UFO-Nytt 1/1988, 1/1989.)

Moving luminous balls

The most common type of UFO in Sweden is the nightly, luminous ball that moves rather quickly in the sky. Typically appearing in a bright colour (red, orange, yellow, white, blue, green, or any other...) they are a recurrent feature of UFOlore. As with most other types, these light-balls have a very strange affection for our Swedish lakes, but then of course almost any Swede live near one of our thousands of lakes, or has his summer cottage by one! Two of the better light-ball cases, each sighted for more than a minute, started off the new year of 1988:

On Jan 2, Aina Ohman from Rättvik (province of Dalarna) went up in the night for a cup of coffee. At 02.57 she saw two white-orange luminous balls flying, one after the other, out over lake Siljan. They were round, larger than the full moon, and had luminous coronas. Their light was constant and blinding. Before disappearing they made a S-turn, increasing their speed and height. (Investigation by P-A Långsvens; UFO-Aktuellt 1/1988).

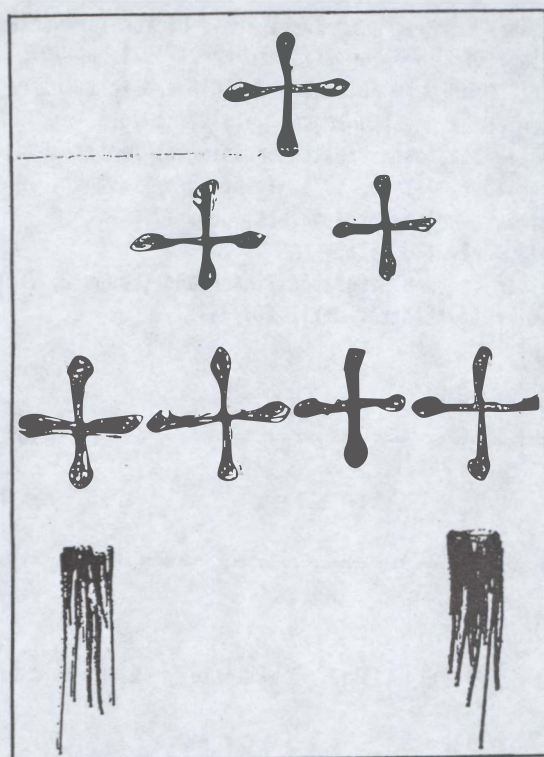
At 19.20, some 15-17 hours after the previous incident Patrik Eriksson from Övannära (Dalarna) stopped his moped on a lonely road in the woods to watch a strange light in the distance. Then a blinding, fire-coloured ball came at high speed over him. The big ball had a smaller, blinking ball in its tail. There was a rushing sound and trees were swinging when the phenomenon passed by slightly above the treetops, at an estimated height of only 15 meters. Case unidentified. (Investigation by P-A Långsvens; UFO-Aktuellt 1/1988; Västerbergslagens UFO-nytt 1/1990.)

Deltas

Another distinct UFO-type that has been observed in Sweden, at least since the 1950s, is the triangle, or delta wing. This, too, is a tricky class for ufologists since the Swedish air force mainly consists of deltawinged Draken and Viggen fighters. 1988 displayed a few cases in this category that remain unexplained. Here's one:

Lars Ohlsson, a press photographer, saw a luminous ball over lake Helgasjön, as he drove towards his home in Rottne (Småland) in the evening of March 14. Arriving at home he fetched a pair of binoculars to watch the light-ball. Suddenly he spotted another object, a strange delta-winged object that silently passed from horizon to horizon in about two minutes. This object had seven points of lights in a triangular pattern, each point consisting of four small lights in a cross pattern. From the back of the object came, at intervals, cascades of light accompanied by powerful formations of sparks.

At the end of the sighting a dull noise was heard, unlike the sound of a jet. The triangle followed the course of a conventional airplane that had just passed, and flew in a



northerly direction over lake Helgasjön. Reportedly, there were disturbances on the TV set.

There is probably no connection, but a Viggen jet fighter crashed in the area earlier the same day, pulverized into small pieces not larger than a fist.

A formation of four Viggen jets was spotted on that same day, so there is still a chance that the triangular UFO may have been a formation of jets at high altitude (the UFO covered just 0.8 cm at arm's length), although civilian and military authorities denied that possibility. The observer lives near the Öjaby airport and is an experienced airplane observer. (Field investigation by Håkan Fenander; Smälänningen, March 16; Västerbergslagens UFO-nytt 1/1989 and 1/1990.)

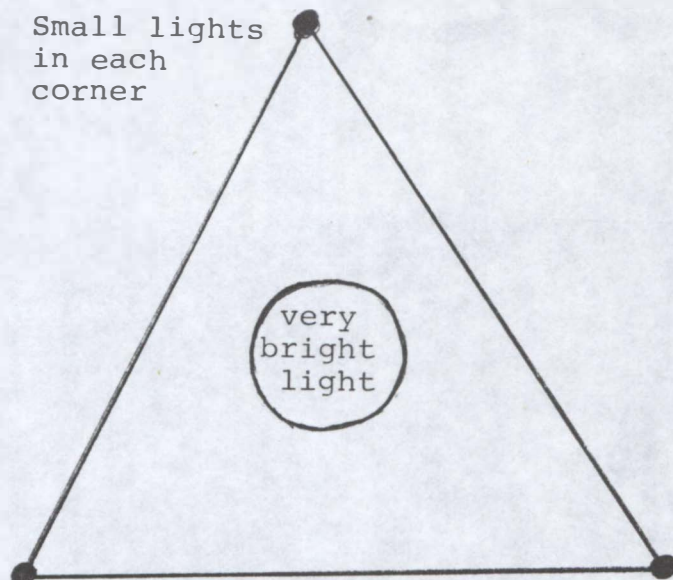
Police sighting

A white light-ball was seen moving and hovering over the northern outskirts of Borlänge (Dalarna) between 22.30 and 23.10, on March 18. A couple driving on Road 70 discovered the ball which they tried to follow on a northwesterly course, but soon lost. Later they rediscovered the UFO and reported it to the police. The crew of a policecar saw the ball and described it as brilliantly white and larger than a full moon. The policemen followed the ball towards St. Tuna, but lost sight of it after three minutes behind some houses. (Investigation by Gudrun Andersson; Västerbergslagens UFO-nytt 4/1988.)

Another triangle

At 22.30 in the evening of April 8, Sven Sörgren and wife, of Loböle, 5 km east of Stöde (Medelpad) saw what he first thought was an airplane coming towards him. They listened for some noise but heard none. The triangular object had three small, red lights in each of the corners and a very strong white light at the centre.

Small lights
in each
corner



"The lights were too far apart for an airplane", Sörgren stated. The object travelled at an altitude of 3-400 meters and was at a distance of about 1.000 meters when it changed course towards south and disappeared. The sighting had lasted for three minutes.

On the next day Sven Sörgren discovered a similar triangle, hovering in the daylight over Stöde at an altitude of some 200 meters. Three minutes later the object disappeared in a cloud of smoke. (Investigation by Loy Selli, UFO-Sundsvall. Västerbergslagens UFO-nytt 1/1990.)

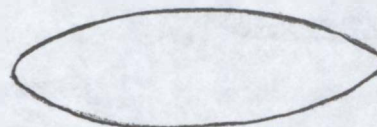
Mini-discs

Two mini disc cases occurred about a month apart:

At 13.30 on May 13, two persons (names known) were drinking coffee in a garden near Enköping (Uppland). Suddenly they saw something flashing in the area between the E-18 and the Stockholm roads. First it resembled a metallic band. As it came close to the Stockholm road it rose and passed over the roadway with a wobbling motion. It was at this moment that it was possible to discern the discoid shape of the object.

When it had passed the road the disc fell towards the ground with a jerking motion, but there was no dust so it seemingly didn't touch the dry ground. The object continued, wobbling, towards the witnesses but rose over trees behind a shed and, finally, disappeared against the blue summer sky. It was travelling at the same velocity all the time and didn't wobble as it rose towards heaven. No sound was heard. It was seen for a total duration of about five minutes. A call in the local newspaper for further witnesses produced no result. (Field investigation by Jörgen Granlie and Arnold Idebring. Västerbergslagens UFO-nytt 1/1990.)

The second mini-disc: A married couple from Borlänge was motoring near Ånsberg (Dalarna) on June 15. On a straight stretch they spotted a small disc, like a lid, that came



right over the treetops in front of them. It travelled slowly, like a cyclist would do. The wife turned around and managed to catch a last glimpse the object as it disappeared between trees. The sighting lasted 18-20 seconds.

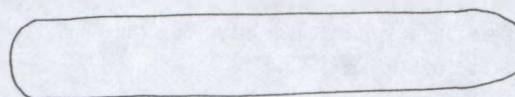
The disc had a straight course. The witnesses had a trailer on their car and traffic behind, so they were unable to stop. When they arrived home, 30 minutes later, they called the local UFO group who sent members to the spot, but nothing was seen. A local call for other witnesses gave no result. (Field investigation by Gudrun Andersson and Ing-Marie Strömberg. Västerbergslagens UFO-nytt 3/1988.)

Flying tubes

UFO reports in the files of the National Defence Research Institute (FOA) numbered just about a dozen for 1988 (AFU's Clas Svahn copied the complete, non-secret, file). One of the FOA cases are worthy of mention, although it may have been a high altitude airplane:

A Mr. Söderberg from Jokkmokk (Lapland) phoned the local military staff at Boden on June 27. Four hours previous to his call, thus at 11.30, he had watched a silvery, oblong body moving towards northwest at high altitude with a contrail behind. The object was moving at high speed and with a strange humming sound, not at all like the sound from a jet. The sighting lasted about 20 seconds. Another man also heard the sound, but made no visual observation. The staff made checks with radar and aviation authorities with no positive solution. (Report to the intelligence section of the Defence Staff, Stockholm).

A rather similar object, this time a chalk-white tube, was spotted by a lady witness over Smedjebacken (Dalarna) two days later. The woman was on her balcony at 18.33 in the evening when she spotted the object travelling towards north on a straight course.



It had the size of a small plane on low altitude. She called for her daughter who also saw the object, that was in sight for 20-30 seconds. The object was soundless and had the appearance a fluorescent tube. (Investigation by Ing-Marie Strömberg; Västerbergslagens UFO-nytt, 3/1988.)

Boats paced by objects

Around midnight on the night between July 13 and 14, Tommy Rapp and his sister were in a boat on lake Morra



Särksjön (Dalarna). A silvery, flat object moved leisurely for 20 minutes from SE to NW, close to the lake. The phenomenon was luminous like a sun. At the moment when they reached the shore, the disc rose with great speed to a higher altitude where it hovered for 3-4 minutes. Then it disappeared. One moment it was there, the other not. (Boris Jungkvist: Kontakt med UFO! (1989), page 148-149).

Just ten days later (July 24) there was a similar case: Four people from Malung were in a motorboat on lake Öjesjön (Dalarna) on the early, beautiful summer morning of July 24, 1988. At 02.35 they discovered three luminous objects that reportedly started to follow them across the lake at a distance of about 400 metres. The objects were very bright, like 200 Watt lamps, but still not blinding. Their upper edges were sharp against the morning sky. The boat was followed for more than five kilometres across the lake, to the small inlet where the witnesses have their summer cottages.

When the witnesses made a 45 degree turn into the bay, the three objects did the same. The objects, shaped like straw hats, started to hover at 300 metres altitude at the entrance of the bay. Each object was the length of a bus. There was an oppressive silence. The witnesses were very distressed by the incident and shut themselves in at about 03.30 (after a 55 minute uninterrupted sighting). (Nya Wermlands-Tidningen, July 30 and Aug 1, 1988; Hemets Journal nr 38/1988.)

The white circle

On the late evening of August 1, three men were the percipients of a strange incident close to lake Venjasjön (Dalarna). They came walking along a road when all of a sudden they discovered a white circle on the ground. The circle was gray-white and dark at the centre. The witnesses thought that the circle was painted on the ground, but soon discovered this was not the case. The circle didn't disappear when they kicked in the the soil. There was no light-beam towards the ground, but at the base of the cloud cover they spotted a hovering luminous object. (Nya Wermlands-Tidningen, Aug 3, 1988.)

The mutilated elk

On August 3 a dead and mutilated elk was found on the small mountain Hunneberg (Västergötland). The elk was lying on an isolated moss with no roads or tracks leading to or from it. There were no damages to the body - except that all four legs were broken at the hip-joints and the joints were shattered. The impression was that the elk had somehow been lifted into the air and then released to fall and break all his legs. On a preceding night a light-ball was observed over the neighbouring mountain, Halleberg, by a woman from Vargön.



Parts of the carcass was sent to Uppsala for a veterinary autopsy. Veterinary Margareta Steen, Sweden's foremost specialist on dead elk, was completely puzzled. There were small holes in the skin that could indicate the use of a high-speed weapon. The use of such weapons is forbidden in Sweden. Another theory was that the elk was hit by lightning, but the body was not burned in any way. A Swedish-American from Colorado, visiting the area, told newspapers that cattle had been found, in the U.S., in a similar way, with broken legs.

Two months later vegetation was dead in an area of about three meters around the place. There was a round brown area surrounding the remaining bones of the elk. Another dead elk, with mysterious injuries, was found in the area, but this elk was in a state of putrefaction and could not be examined. A third elk was, according to

newspaper rumour, found in Dalarna with similar injuries and an extremely low bequerell count of 40. (Measuring the radiation of dead animals is standard procedure in Sweden after the Tjernobyl nuclear disaster).

Still, a "natural" cause for the elk's death seems quite probable. That the elk had been standing in water when a lighting stroke hit him, was a popular theory. This may have produced the peculiar injuries to his bones. Critics also claimed that brown patches close to the bodies of dead animals are quite natural since vegetation is "worn" by predators. (Elfsborgs Läns Allehanda, August 4 and 6, Sept 29, Oct 15 and 20, 1988; Nya Wermlands-Tidningen, Sept 30; Skaraborgs Läns Tidning, Sept 30; UFO-Aktuellt 3/1988.)

Formation or giant wing?

On Sept 6, Manfred Holmberg from Berg (Östergötland) was out at 23.10 hours, watching the night sky. Suddenly he caught sight of a half-circle formation of six round, dull lights that crossed the heavens. There was no sound. It seemed as if the lights were on a large object since they didn't change their relative distance to each other.

At about the same time another witness, Sonja Posth, saw what was probably the same formation of lights travelling in an arched formation over Ljungsbro (Östergötland). Mrs. Posth said the lights were so blinding that she had dark spots before her eyes afterwards. The Defence Staff knew of nothing that could identify the sightings. A similar formation of lights, seen from several mid-Swedish places at about 01.00 on Aug. 21, was probably a satellite re-entry. (Investigation by Kjell Thörnlund. UFO-Information, 4/1988; Östgöta Correspondenten, Sept 9, 10 and 13, 1988.)

In the autumn, a wave of sightings was reported in newspapers from the provinces of Dalarna and Värmland. Very little is known about these cases due to two reasons: 1) Most of them were reported to newspapers and to a new skywatching group that has published very little of their data (except for some short reports in Boris Jungkvist's most recent book) and 2) there was a transition in leadership of the UFO-Sweden report centre.

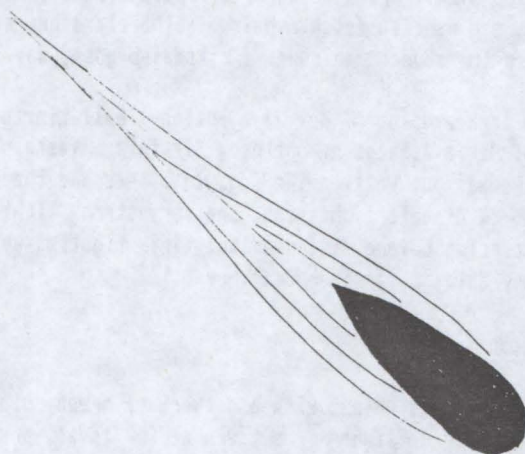
From a psychological viewpoint there may be obvious reasons for this west-Swedish "wave": the media reports of enthusiast ufologists skywatching from hilltops in the area, the case of the "mutilated elk" in August, the appearance of several bright planets in the night sky, and, finally, Whitley Strieber's appearance on TV and in dozens of articles, in October, to promote the Swedish edition of "Communion". After a heavy advertising campaign "Communion" sold some 50.000 copies in Sweden, the best for any UFO book ever.

A few of the autumn cases seem reasonably documented for a mention, however. Karin Sjöberg was driving on road 71 near Dala-Floda (Dalarna) on Sept. 27, when she sighted a yellow ball for 5 minutes. At times she felt that she was followed by the phenomenon that flew at treetop level close to the car and at the same speed. She was blinded and had sore eyes. This was just one among numerous cases of light-balls during the autumn. (Boris Jungkvist: Kontakt med UFO! (1989), page 144.)

Ghost missile?

At least since 1939 Swedish citizens have observed unidentified missile-like objects, usually with small fins, particularly in 1946 (with some 160 clear-cut cases for that year alone). In the typical case this type of sighting has a short duration of between 5 seconds and one minute, and occurs on a bright day near a lake. The object usually travels in a direction out over the water, sometimes crashing into the lake or river. We now have many hundreds of these cases in our files.

One 1988 "borderline case" in this category described a black, oblong object, pointed at the rear (but with no wings) going over lake Torröjen (Jämtland) on September 28. It was a bright day and the time was 13.20. The witnesses was watching the olympic games on TV when there were disturbances (two black horizontal bands). At the same time a lamp started to go on and off. The witness thought a thunderstorm was coming up, so he shut off the TV.



Suddenly, he saw the black object that headed towards the northeast at high speed and disappeared in two seconds behind the mountain Grönfjället. (Investigation by Peder Berglund, UFO-Z; Östersunds-Posten, Sept 29, 1988.)

The roaring "platform"

Another familiar category in Swedish UFO files is the roaring or rumbling, often huge object, seen at dusk or in the night. Usually it is triangular, or a square "platform", that has a display of multi-coloured lights. It makes you think of the American "stealth" aircraft, but why would such constructions be tested over neutral Sweden? (But then, of course, one might also ask why Soviet submarines are tested along the Swedish coasts?)

One of these roaring objects was seen, and heard, by many witnesses from Kristinehamn (Värmland) in the evening of Sept. 30. Windows were rattling and people thought a war had started. A bright, red object with three points of lights hovered over a power station, and then rose straight up into the air with a loud rumble leaving smoke behind. The object travelled to the south and headed for lake Vänern. Reportedly, there were no military or civilian aircraft in the area, but it is difficult to deliver a definite verdict on this case. (Nya Wermlands-Tidningen, Oct 3 and 6; Nya Kristinehamns-Posten, Oct 5 and 7)

Huge disc over airfield

Evert Karlsson from Karlskoga (Närke), a private pilot, had just landed on the Karlskoga airfield, at noon on Oct. 1, when he reportedly saw a gigantic disc come out of the cloud cover at an altitude of about 1.000 meters. The disc was 50-100 meters in diameter, grey, flat and round. The upper part was shaped like a parachute. Before disappearing into the woods south of Gelleråsen, the disc made several circles over the area. Two similar saucers were seen near the airfield on Nov 1, 1971 by two young boys. (Karlskoga-Degerfors-Storfors Tidning, Oct 3, 1988. Boris Jungkvist: Kontakt med UFO! (1989), page 147; Nya Wermlands-Tidningen, Oct 7, 1988. GICOFF-Information 6/1971.)

A triangle with clearly defined contours and a light in each corner (two yellow and one red) was seen late in the evening of Oct 31, by Sonja Eriksson of Ivarsbjörke (Värmland). The object was larger than the moon and travelled slowly in an westerly direction. After half-a-minute she went to fetch a pair of binoculars but as she returned the object was gone. (Fryksdalsbygden, Nov 3)

In the dark evening of Nov 2, a luminous ball circled the home of Börje Johansson, Örlinge, Möklinta (Västmanland) when he was out walking the dog. In 30 seconds the small (abt 20 cm diameter), hissing, and very strong light made three circles before disappearing. (Investigation by Mats Nilsson, Sala; Sala Allehanda, Nov 8.)

Vibration in car

A blue, luminous object with a network of green, blue and white coloured lights was seen at low level, possibly landed in a field, near Segerstad (Värmland), by Linnea Öhqvist in the evening of Nov. 6.

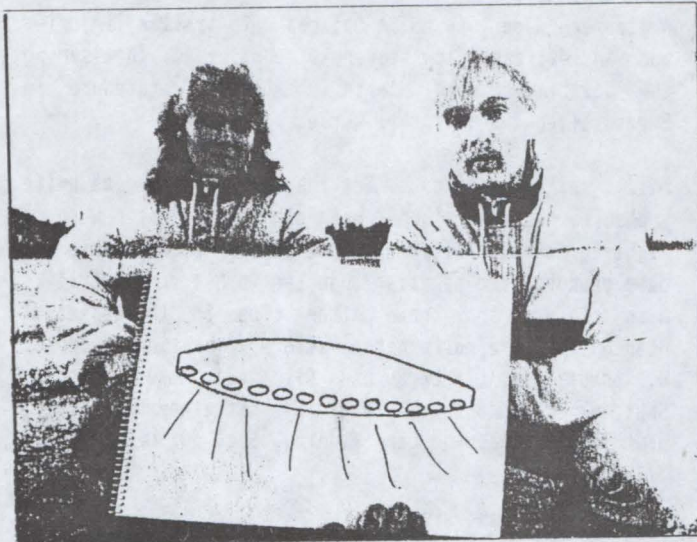
On the following night (Nov 7), Ingemar Nilsson of östra Xätern (Värmland) was driving when he saw an eggshaped object with white, green and blue colours. In front of it another round object was flying in the same direction.

In the next moment the objects changed their course and came towards the witness. The car started to vibrate and the witness decided to drive off. He was followed by the objects that finally stopped, hovering over lake Fryken. The sighting lasted for two hours. (Boris Jungkvist: Kontakt med UFO!, pages 146-148; Värmlands Folkblad, Nov 9; Nya Wermlands-Tidningen, Dec 17.)

Huge "bomber"

Susanne Hansson and Mikael Olofsson from Vittsjö (Skåne), in southern Sweden, were frightened by yet another UFO incident late in the evening of Nov 6. A huge plane-like structure with strong lights, absolutely noiseless, was seen by the couple (and Mikael's father). The object disappeared on the horizon after about 30 seconds.

Susanne and Mikael decided to drive in the direction where the object had disappeared and had another sighting of a mushroom-shaped object surrounded by bright lights. Later on, they spotted a huge (75-100 meters) object that



hovered over a golf-course. "I will never forget the scene", said Susanne. "The object was rather flat but equipped with many lights. It shone lights in several colours: red, yellow and green. The green light was very intense."

When they returned to the golf course later in the evening the object was gone. There were no traces when Mikael searched the area on the following morning. Dozens of other witnesses called the local newspaper to report similar observations during that same evening. One farmer called the police, since he was sure an airplane was about to crash.

Another farmer said the object was unbelievably huge, like the American bombers that landed in south-Sweden during the end of the war. A third farmer and his wife saw a slow-moving object only 50 meters over the tree-tops. Every other second it produced a bright, blue flash like from a lightning bolt. A family living near the golf course reported disturbances on their TV set as they saw a strange luminous object. (Norra Skåne, Nov. 8 and 9, 1988).

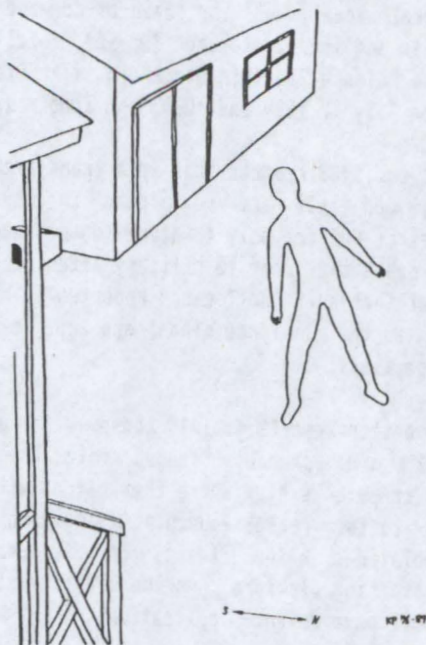
Effects on environment

Walking the dogs in the early morning of Nov. 18, Birgit Löfgren heard a sound. Looking up she saw an object that resembled the water tower of Örebro (mushroom-shaped), without its foot, that hovered above the treetops. It was grey and there was light from windows on the upper part. The witness started running for home. She turned around two times to see the object moving towards the west. (Boris Jungkvist: Kontakt med UFO!, p.145; Värmlands Folkblad, Nov 25; Karlstads-Tidningen, Dec 1.)

Rose-Marie Ståhlberg and her husband Mikael, from Ockelbo (Gästrikland) wrote a very detailed report of three luminous balls observed for three hours just after midnight on Nov 19. They were positioned in a triangle that kept revolving in the same position in the west. The lights kept moving up and down between trees, only 15-20 meters from their house, sometimes even closer. The next day they went to the area to look for traces but none was found. (Investigation by Roland Östlund, Gävle. Västerbottens UFO-nytt 1/1989.)

Humanoid

On Nov 24, Rune Asplund from Dövíken (Jämtland) was drinking coffee at his kitchen table. It was shortly past 21.00. Suddenly he caught sight of a humanoid creature in the yard outside, about six meters from the house. The creature was about 1,5 meters tall, stood straddle-legged with arms stretched out from the body.



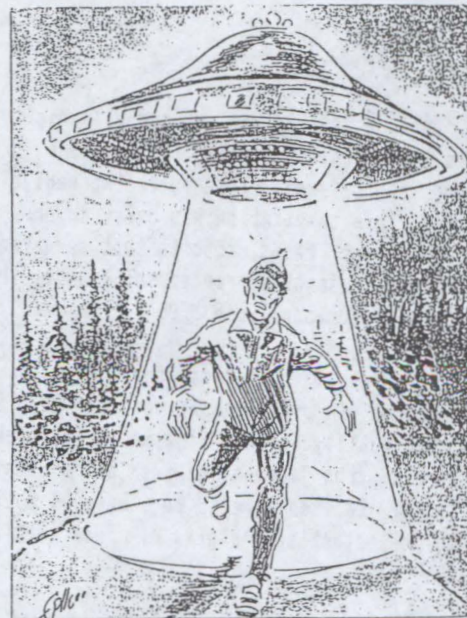
He had a frogman's dress covering head, face and feet. The dress was of material like aluminum, with reflections. The creature stood in the same place, rocking to and fro. The witness saw it for about one minute, but when Rune Asplund opened the door the creature disappeared into nothing.

His three dogs were barking like when a stranger arrives. In the winter of 1987 Asplund's neighbour saw, at the same place, a small man (about 1 meter tall) disappear into nothing. According to Asplund a police car stopped inexplicably as an unidentified object passed by on the same evening. This happened at Hunge, about 10 kms from Dövíken, but hasn't been confirmed. (Investigations by Kurt Persson, UFO-2 and Clas Svahn, AFU; Norrbottens-Kuriren, April 22, 1989.)

Disc or satellite launch?

Tore Lundkvist from Aselet (Västerbotten) was running in the woods on Nov. 26, when he encountered a disc-shaped object. The silvery object was over the woods to the east. It was about 25 meters in diameter and some 15 meters over the treetops, according to the first interviews with the witness. Lundkvist was so frightened that he threw himself on the ground, where he lay for two minutes. A while later the soundless object disappeared to the southeast.

Lundkvist embellished his story. He claimed that he was paralyzed by beams that shot out of the object, that the object had a cupola and windows, and that it was as low as five meters above the ground. When interviewed by Clas Svahn in August 1989, he retracted these statements. He obviously has alcohol problems that, combined with the fear he felt, made him overdo his first story.

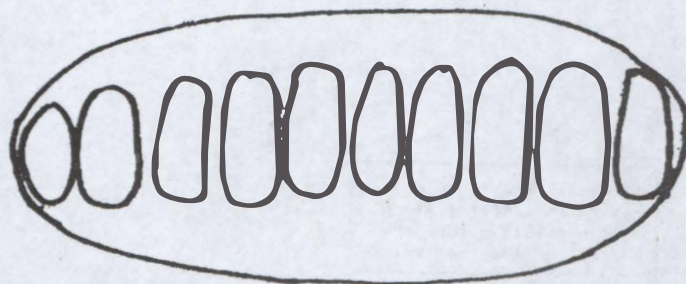


The object hovered during two minutes, a fact that - combined with the easterly direction where it was seen - has started speculation that it was in fact the luminous tail of a Soviet satellite launch. No other witness, however, reported such a sight on Nov. 26. Rocket launches from western Russia are usually well-observed in northern Scandinavia. (Field investigation by Clas Svahn; UFO-Aktuellt, 3/1989; Norra Västerbotten, Nov 29 and 30, 1988.)

Final cases of the year

A yellow-white light-ball was seen over Hammerdalssjön, the lake near Hammerdal (Jämtland) on Dec 9. Three witnesses watched the ball traverse the frozen lake at an altitude of 6-10 meters. The ball moved very fast and took on an orange-red colour at the end of the 7-10 seconds long sighting. It disappeared behind trees. (Investigation by Kurt Persson, UFO-2, östersund.)

On Dec 27, Linnea Szabo, from Kristinehamn (Värmland) watched a clear, white light approach from the southwest. When it was above her house the light dimmed and Linnea, and her husband, could discern a baseball shaped object with windows.



After a duration of about 1,5 minutes there was a loud rumbling noise (like from 2 or 3 air force jets) and the object sped off, much faster than a jet. Shortly before the incident, TV reception was disturbed. (Nya Wermlands-Tidningen, Dec 31; Boris Jungkvist; Kontakt med UFO! (1989) pp. 147-148).

Defence secrets

By "normal" standards 1988 was an unusually rich year for UFO reports in Sweden. Especially the western provinces of Värmland and Dalarna, close to the Norwegian border, were affected. This compilation has only covered a few dozen of the best cases, reports that seem reasonably well documented. I cannot guarantee, of course, that each case is a genuine, unidentified UFO.

In almost every one of these cases there were vague notes in the newspapers of other sightings. Since, in many instances, the quality of investigation seem rather poor, we must refrain from making claims of a substantial "wave". It may, to some extent, be a wave of public fear produced by unsubstantiated claims of "elk mutilations" and "strieberism"...

One fact stands clear, however: The "wave" produced further evidence that UFO investigation, on the official military level, is not carried out by FOA (the Research Institute of National Defence) as is often claimed in the media.


Several of the 1988 sightings were reported to local wings of the Air Force, where UFO reports are sometimes quite well received (much depends on the attitude of the officer answering the phone). In 1988 we know, from the newspapers, that the Air Force got reports of, or

investigated, the Rottne triangle of March 18 and the Viltstjä "bomber" of November 6. There were also rumoured investigations of several reports in Värmland. None of these investigations or documents had reached the open, non-secret FOA files by early 1989, when Clas Svahn made copies from these files.

UFO reports are routinely transferred, by Swedish defence, from the local level, up the chain-of-command to the regional staffs and finally to the "Op 5" intelligence section of the Defence Staff in Stockholm. (The Staff was reorganized on July 1, 1989 and "Op 5" no longer exists).

The dozen, or so, 1988 reports that were transferred from intelligence, and that are now found in the open, official files of FOA are only a watered-down sample of the "worst" cases that came to military attention. It is quite apparent that most "hot" cases reported to military sources (such as the air force wings) are kept in secrecy at the Defence Staff.

At least the better reports (mainly those with military implications) are probably logged into the Staffs intelligence computer system where they mix up with notes of military tests, rocket launchings, and aircraft and submarine violations. A few classes of UFO phenomena, such as the "roaring platform", or the RPV-like missiles, definitely must have defence implications.

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